

OUR MILITARY ATTACHES.

PLEASANT DETAILS WHICH THE AVERAGE OFFICER CANNOT TAKE.

Where Foreign Nations Send High Officers, Well Paid. We Send Jeunes or Saboteurs at Low Pay—What Military Attaches now keep up Appearances

Comparatively little is known outside of diplomatic circles about the officers of Uncle Sam's regular army who are stationed at the principal capitals in Europe with a view to gathering all possible information about foreign war methods. Although their work is said to be very important, no adequate provision is made for their support. They are obliged to live like lords, while receiving only subalterns' pay. One consequence is that these positions—exceedingly desirable for any one who has social ambitions and a liking for the pomp and pageantry of courts—fall to the lot of men who are rich enough to bid for them. Poor officers cannot afford to hold them.

The United States have all Europe to work for in the business of military experiments. In Europe is to be observed the spectacle of a number of nations constantly at war of ambition. Thus the spirit of competition is a constant state of tension. The old countries are continually trying new guns, fresh types of projectiles, novel explosives, improved equipments, and the like. They even practice war at the most autumn maneuvers in Germany, Austria, and France, when entire armies engage in mimic campaigns. What they learn and invent is mostly at our service. Their costly ideas Uncle Sam gets for nothing. But Uncle Sam is so severely economical that he will not give wages to our attaches abroad, whose task it is to gather all this information.

The military attaché abroad is obliged to live at great expense. He must have an office, and a clerk to copy and translate. He must buy books and subscribe to all the leading papers. He must entertain, and maintain himself in the best society. He must appear customarily in full dress uniform, which is rarely required here. He must live up to his position, according to European notions, not according to American ideas. He must not go officially on foot, but must have a proper carriage. He cannot afford to occupy an ordinary stall at the theatre, but must have a box. He must belong to the fashionable clubs, and must give occasional dinners without regard to cost. He must be very scrupulous in making visits, omitting no one from whom he may receive a service.

The attaché is not merely an officer of the army; he is the representative of the military power of the United States. His business bears a certain analogy to that of the commercial agent, who must stop at the best hotels and spend money liberally to hold customers for the goods he sells. The attaché must be in the swim, else he will be considered a nobody and will fail to accomplish his mission. It is required of him that he shall play the grand seigneur and bear on terms of intimacy with the great. He must have money to travel, to visit gun factories and powder works, for example, in order to gain knowledge as to materials and methods of production. He must attend the great autumn maneuvers for the purpose of observing those wonderful spectacles, which correspond to our military encampments, though on a gigantic scale.

At these maneuvers the military attaches of the sovereigns of the world meet.

A friend in London reported that the conductor presents the machine to the passenger, and that the passenger drops his ticket in a slot in the top. Bad money will not go in. A good coin goes rattling down to the bottom slot, and, on reaching the bottom, the slot opens and the conductor takes the coin. The conductor of the bus tells the passenger that his fare has been recorded properly, and he may rest assured that the money will remain in his pocket.

The attaché's expenses, Congress allows to the military attaches not one cent. The army officer acting in this capacity abroad has no more money than the average citizen of the United States. In addition to his pay he has the monthly allowance of \$15 a month per room. A Lieutenant is entitled to two rooms, while a Captain may have three, and a Major four. When an appropriation was made allowing \$10 a week to each attaché for contingent expenses, the attaché refused. The attaché makes necessary arrangements with his own country, and sends his accounts to the Secretary of War. The latter prunes the items and sometimes allows him an extra sum. The attaché cannot buy a magazine for business purposes without consulting the War Department and obtaining its permission.

A friend in London reported that the office provided for him was one shabby little room with a desk and a few chairs. He asked permission to purchase a typewriter, but it was refused. The attaché then sent a bill which cuts the attaché's accounts to the quick for fuel, lights, and forage for horses. If the attaché were to do this, he would be compelled to pay his way, and the attaché's expenses would be paid by the War Department and information has been given ready. Documents and maps have been sent to Washington, and sent to Washington under confidential seal.

Uncle Sam's War Department is eager to imitate the model adopted by European Governments, and is gathering information about this branch of scientific achievement. European country must have the best possible arms, equipments, maps, &c. Each country tries to be the first. The United States, then, Uncle Sam has himself, particularly in his strategic topography. The general staff of the German army makes a business of collecting all the information possible, and it is to begin with, it keeps up to date a complete and exhaustive description of Germany and her resources. In time of emergency, it is known where to look for ships, for wheat, for horses, where for meat, and where for coal and iron. Accurate estimates are always at hand as to the cost of transportation, and the facilities of travel and exactly what each district will contribute in the shape of supplies. Thus it is that the attaché can know what would have to be done to meet every conceivable contingency. The location of every possible fortification, and the number of men needed to accomplish in an astoundingly short space of time.

Such an attaché could have been of incalculable value to the United States at the outbreak of the civil war. At that time this government had no way to look for anything. Uncle Sam did not know where to get ammunition, clothing, or any sort of raw material. He had only a few arsenals, some of which were in the hands of the rebels. Months of precious time had to be spent in collecting materials and in making a fair start. Such an attaché would have been an important, but so prevent an enemy from marching in, far as foreign nations are concerned, the possibility of such an attaché is remote. In the various positions, their torpedoes systems, &c. But such matters as improved guns, better powder, and the like, are of great interest, and worth studying through paid experts.

Circumstances are very different in Europe. The attaché, with the German army, tries to secure every possible bit of information about the neighboring countries. It knows the roads and quickest route to every city in the territories, and to every town, and to every place to the source whence a city gets its water supply, and as to how the latter might be cut off or made useless. All available facts are obtained as to the availability of the various batteries, the arms they carry, the nature of their equipments, their uniforms, their battery organization, and the like. The attaché has his own way of fighting. Uncle Sam's attaché, for instance, fights dismounted, deploying as infantry, and employs the revolver to a considerable extent as a weapon.

Uncle Sam has practically no mounted artillery, such as they have abroad. In foreign service, the attaché is forced to use usually the country means of transport, and the use of the country carriage, thus making so much more weight to pull. Some nations use the horse, others the mule, others the camel, others the elephant, making it of household use. Uncle Sam has his sword, the sword of justice, which still survives as a symbol of strength, but is despised with contempt. To which the attaché replies, "The horse requires a strong and skilled arm. Many horses are lost, therefore the use of the horse is not important in future war will be in the supplying of ammunition to the firing line. Repeating rifles and guns which throw showers of

bullets require immense quantities of cartridges. It will be a great point in tactics to cut off the supply of cartridges, and to destroy the small arms ammunition columns."

Some people suppose that a military attaché is expected to employ all sorts of devious ways to obtain information, the only way being that he shall not be found out. This is absolutely incorrect. The harboring of such a suspicion is a violation of the international spirit of a friendly international spirit, and a betrayal of the confidence thus given would be promptly stamped as dishonorable. The army does not make any attempt to get at secrets. He makes no attempt to get at secrets. The facts which he may gather ultimately are open to all, and the world is informed.

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